

CHAIR ACCESSORY

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application 60/501,225 filed September 8, 2003.

5

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

10

The present invention relates generally to tote bags used for carrying items to a desired location for selective usage of the items. More particularly, the present invention relates to a specialized tote bag that may be conveniently supported by a chair for co-location if the items stored in the bag with a person sitting in the chair.

2. Discussion of the Prior Art

15

Tote bags and the like have been known for years for the storage and carriage of personal items to and from various locations. Many such prior art bags include a pouch and a shoulder strap for slinging the bag over one's shoulder. Such bags are adapted for various activities, such as leisure activities and recreational activities during which a person sits on a chair, stool or other ergonomic device designed to reduce stress on one's back or knees.

20

Sportsmen, such as recreational fishermen, use various tackle boxes and bags to carrying necessary items to and from sporting sites. Such prior art devices work well for the carriage of items, however, many such devices are not configured to be supported on or by chair. As a result, the box or bag is commonly placed on the ground near the chair or stool and may be accidentally kicked or knocked, potentially scattering the contents of the box or bag.

25

A prior art tote bag or tackle box could be attached to and suspended from the chair to prevent accidentally kicking or knocking it. However, many chairs used in recreational activities, such as fishing, are relatively light weight. As a result, attaching a bag or box to a chair may cause it to be unbalanced to the point where when the person engaged in the activity stands up or leaves the chair, the chair may fall over.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A chair accessory device broadly comprises first and second tote bags, and a coupling panel coupling the bags together. Each tote bag includes inner and outer panels, opposed side panels and a bottom panel defining an interior storage pouch for carriage and storage of items. The side and bottom panels are biased toward a folded condition so that the pouch may be expanded and contracted depending on the volume of items therein.

The coupling panel includes opposed first and second end. Each end is attached to one of the bags, thereby coupling the bags together. The coupling panel is flexible and may be folded so that the bags may be selectively brought together in relatively close proximity to each other, or pulled away from each other. When pulled apart, the coupling panel flattens and may be placed over the seat portion of a chair, the bags hanging from the sides of the chair.

The device includes a bag attachment structure for selectively securing the first and second bags in close proximity to each other. The attachment structure includes several hook-type pads placed on one of the first and second ends of the coupling panel and loop-type pads placed on the other end of the coupling panel. As the bags are brought together, the coupling panel folds so that the hook pads engage the loop pads for attaching the bags to each other.

A first shoulder strap is coupled with the first bag and a second shoulder strap is coupled with the second bag. The straps include structure for coupling them together so that when the bags are brought into close proximity to each other, the straps function as a single strap, and may be used to carry the device over one's shoulder.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

A preferred embodiment of a chair accessory device is described in detail below with reference to the drawing figures, wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a chair accessory device constructed in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention shown in place on the seat portion of a chair;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the device of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a bottom view of the device of Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a front elevation of the device of Fig. 2;

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the device of Fig. 2 wherein the tote bags are in close proximity to each other; and

Fig. 6 is a front elevation of the device of Fig. 5.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Turning now to the drawing figures, a chair accessory device 10 constructed in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention is shown. The chair accessory device 10 broadly comprises a first tote bag 12 and a second tote bag 14, and a coupling panel 16 coupling the bags 12, 14 together. The device 10 is configured to be supported by a chair 18 so that the bags 12, 14 depend from each of the sides of the chair 18.

Each of the tote bags 12, 14 includes inner and outer panels 20, 22, opposed side panels 24 and a bottom panel 26. The panels 20, 22, 24 and 26 define a storage pouch presenting an interior space for carriage and storage of items. The panels 20, 22, 24 and 26 are constructed from a flexible material, such as canvas, and may be treated by any known technique to yield a degree of water resistance for protecting the items stored in the bags 12, 14 from rain and the like.

Turning to Fig. 2, the side and bottom panels 24, 26 are biased toward a folded condition so that the bags 12, 14 are relatively flat when empty. The folding of the panels 24, 26 permit the bags 12, 14 to expand when filled with items, and return to a relatively flat

condition when empty. In this Figure, bag 12 is shown as empty, while bag 14 includes items that have expanded the size of the bag 14.

A pair of pockets 29 is attached to the outside of the outer panels 22. The pockets 29 may be used for organizing items carried by the device 10. Additional pockets may be provided in each of the pockets for organizational purposes.

Flaps 30 are attached to the upper portion of the inner panels 20 of the bags 12, 14. The flaps 30 are configured to be pulled over the outer panels 22 for enclosing the interior space of the bags 12, 14. A conventional zipper 32 is also attached to the upper portions of the inner and outer panels 20, 22 for selective enclosing of the interior space of the bags 12, 14. A pad 34 of hook-and-loop material is attached to the outer panels 22 and a corresponding pad 36 of hook-and-loop material is attached to the inside of the flaps 30 for securing the flaps 30 to the outer panels 22.

The coupling panel 16 includes opposed first and second ends 38, 40. The coupling panel 16 presents a generally hour-glass-shaped profile and is constructed from a flexible material, such as canvas, so that the panel 16 may be folded when the bags 12, 14 are brought in close proximity to each other. The first end 38 of the coupling panel is attached to the first bag 12, and the second end 40 is attached to the second bag 14.

The device 10 includes bag attachment structure for selectively securing the bags 12, 14 in close proximity to each other. Three spaced apart hook-and-loop pads 42 are attached to each end 38, 40 of the coupling panel 16. When the bags 12, 14 are brought together, the three pads 42 on the first end 38 engage the three corresponding pads 42 on the second end 40, securing the bags 12, 14 in close proximity to each other. In addition, two spaced apart hook-and-loop pads 44 are attached to the inner panel 20 of the first bags 12, and two corresponding hook-and-loop pads 46 are attached to the inner panel 20 of the second bag 14. The pads 44 on the first bag 12 engage the pads 46 on the second bag 14 when the bags 12, 14 are brought together, securing the bags 12, 14 in close proximity to each other.

A first shoulder strap 48 is removably coupled by a pair of clips 49 to the first bag 12 and a second shoulder strap 50 is removably coupled by a pair of clips 52 to the second bag 14. The straps 48, 50 include structure (not shown) for coupling them together so that when

the bags 12, 14 are brought into close proximity to each other and secured, the straps may be coupled together as a single strap, and may be used to carry the device 10 over one's shoulder. Preferably, the straps 48, 50 each include corresponding pads of hook-and-loop material attached near the apex of each strap 48, 50.

5 A handle 54 is attached to each of the bags 12, 14 providing a means for carrying the device 10 by hand. The handles 54 may be constructed from any various known material commonly used in the art of bag or satchel handles. Corresponding pads of hook-and-loop material are provided on each handle 54 as a handle attaching structure for selectively
10 securing the handles 54 to each other. It will be appreciated that the handle attaching structure also aids in securing the bags 12, 14 in close proximity to each other.

 A securing strap 56 is positioned beneath the coupling panel for securing the device 10 to the seat of the chair 18. The securing strap 56 presents opposed first and second ends 58, 60 and a clasp 62. The strap 56 is adjustable in length and flexible so that when the bags 12, 14 are brought together, the strap 56 folds.

15 In use, the device 10 is configured for toting items to and from remote locations. In a fishing application, the pouches of the bags 12, 14 are filled with desired items, and the device 10 is carried to a fishing location. The bags 12, 14 are pulled apart so that the coupling panel 16 is exposed and stretches into a horizontal orientation. The device 10 is then placed over the seat of the chair 18 so that the coupling panel 16 rests on the seat and
20 the bags 12, 14 depend from the sides of the chair 18. In this position, the items stored in the bags 12, 14 are readily accessible to a person sitting in the chair 18. In addition, when the person stands or otherwise gets up off of the seat of the chair 18, the device 10, if evenly loaded, will not tend to tip the chair 18 as one heavy bag tied to one side of the chair would. The securing strap 56 secures the device 10 to the chair by unclasping the clasp 62, placing
25 the ends 58, 60 of the strap 56 underneath the seat, and reclasping the clasp 62. The length of the strap 56 is then adjusted providing a snug fit.

 When the activity is finished, the device 10 is finished, the device 10 is removed by unclasping the clasp 62, and pulling the device from the seat. Once removed, the bags 12, 14 are brought together until the pads 42, 44 and 46 engage the respective pads 42, 44 and

14 are brought together until the pads 42, 44 and 46 engage the respective pads 42, 44 and 46, securing the bags 12, 14 in close proximity to each other. Once the bags 12, 14 are secured, the shoulder straps 48, 50 are secured together and the handles 54 are secured together. The device 10 may be carried over the shoulder or by hand.

5 Although the invention has been described in the above preferred embodiment with reference to the drawing figures, it is understood that substitutions may be made and equivalents employed herein with departing from the scope of the invention as set forth in the following claims.